



Notes from the Director

No. 36

20 December 1978

I want to elaborate on the traditional holiday greetings that I sent to all employees today.

1978 has been an important year for the Central Intelligence Agency. I see evidence wherever I go that the vital contribution we are making to the strength of this nation is recognized and understood more widely than ever before. With this understanding has come the beginnings of a turnaround in the attitude of the public and significant portions of the media.

More and more I am asked not whether we are doing something we should *not* be doing, as was the case just a year ago, but, rather, can we do the job we *must* do, given the restraints that have been placed on us. I am happy to say that we can; that we are doing it better than ever; and that, despite inevitable criticism from time to time, overwhelmingly our consumers express to me strong praise for the continued exceptional quality of our product.

As 1978 comes to a close, I want you all to know how grateful I am for your performance that has made this record possible. Each Directorate has contributed importantly to the intelligence on which the President and other decisionmakers in our government have depended. It has been a very successful year.

While there have been positive changes in official, media and public attitudes toward us, some of the media coverage in recent weeks has been critical of our efforts. As intelligence professionals I am sure you can put this criticism into perspective, benefiting from that which is accurate and ignoring the rest. While the media has a legitimate function to observe and report on what it sees in government, in the area of intelligence it can never possess all the facts. Consequently, distortion or misrepresentation often characterize what is said publicly about us.

This can be discouraging, but it should not be because we know of the wide agreement among our consumers that our intelligence product has been uniformly first class. While there is always room for improvement, and for that we shall continually strive, you can be justly proud of what you have accomplished this year.

This outstanding record, often made at great personal sacrifice, is possible only because you make it so. The employees of this Agency and their families are its strength. I appreciate the splendid job you are doing and assure you the vast majority of your fellow citizens do too.

I also appreciate the contribution over many years of those of you who are retiring as this year ends. It is always sad to see old friends depart. However, each leaves a legacy of work well done, the contributions of ideas and changes from which we all benefit, and the responsibility to those who follow to carry on.

I can appreciate how many of you who are retiring feel because on December 31st I will retire also, ending over 32 years of service in the United States Navy. This will not change my status as Director of Central Intelligence in any way. I look forward to the continuing challenges which lie ahead of us. I am confident that, working together, we will continue successfully to meet those challenges in the years ahead.

It is your unstinting dedication to the important job we do; the sacrifices you and your families routinely make; and your dependably outstanding performance which ensure that the Central Intelligence Agency will remain without a peer in the world.

Thanks for a job well done. Mrs. Turner joins me in sending you sincere wishes for a bright and prosperous New Year.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Stansfield Turner", with a stylized, cursive script.

STANSFIELD TURNER
Director